



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation
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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Massachusetts Man Sentenced to Prison for Role in Stolen Identity Tax Refund Fraud Scheme

*Filed Fraudulent Income Tax Returns Using the Stolen Identities of Puerto Rican U.S.
Citizens*

A Lawrence, Massachusetts, resident pleaded guilty today to one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States, 14 counts of conversion of government property, two counts of access device fraud and 14 counts of aggravated identity theft, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciraolo of the Justice Department's Tax Division, U.S. Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz for the District of Massachusetts, Special Agent in Charge Joel Garland of the Internal Revenue Service–Criminal Investigation's (IRS-CI) Boston Field Office and Special Agent in Charge Stephen A. Marks of the U.S. Secret Service.

According to the indictment and documents filed with the court, between 2011 and 2015, Juan Santiago, 38, and another individual used the personal identifying information of Puerto Rican U.S. citizens to file fraudulent federal income tax returns. The fraudulent tax returns resulted in the issuance of tax refunds in the form of U.S. Treasury checks, which were mailed to addresses in Massachusetts and elsewhere, controlled by Santiago and the other individual. The scheme resulted in thousands of fraudulent income tax returns filed with the IRS during the prosecution years. Santiago distributed a list of 100 stolen identities that were associated with approximately \$333,540 in fraudulent tax refunds.

Sentencing is set for July 15. Santiago faces a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison on the conspiracy charge, five years in prison on each count of conversion of government property and five years in prison on each count of access device fraud. For each count of aggravated identity theft, Santiago faces a mandatory minimum prison term of two years, which will run consecutive to any other term of imprisonment he receives. Santiago also faces monetary penalties.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciraolo thanked special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Secret Service, who investigated this case and Senior

Litigation Counsel Corey Smith of the Tax Division, who prosecuted this case in conjunction with the U.S. Attorney's Office's Public Corruption Unit.

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